**Classroom Debate Basics**

This is an introductory guide to the basic rules and techniques needed for classroom debates. You will be put into groups called the affirmative (pro/for) and opposing (con/against). You will learn how to structure an argument to support your position, and predict what your opponent might say.

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| Structure of your Argument: | Example of Argument (sample): |
| **Assertion**: A statement that you’re trying to prove | Grades should not be used in school. |
| **Reasoning**: Offering support for your assertion, the “because” part of your argument | Grades are no longer an appropriate measurement of students’ knowledge of a specific topic. |
| **Evidence**: Support your reasoning using facts, statistics, and research done on you topic. | Recent studies show that students who were not graded or made to take tests retained 51% more of the information, than those who were. |

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| How to Rebuttal the Argument: | Examples of Word Choice: |
| **Step 1:** Briefly restate the point you are about to discuss. | They say, In response to, You mentioned, I would like to comment on |
| **Step 2:** Make your counter-assertion. | After you have returned to the point you want to transition into your counter-argument using: but, however, although |
| **Step 3:** Offer reasoning and evidence of why your point is correct. | Because, based off of, after reading from… |
| **Step 4:** Conclude by comparing your point to the point you’re discussing. | Therefore, In conclusion, Based off of the evidence |

**Helpful Debate Tips:**

1. Listen carefully to all participants.
2. Take notes in different columns to track different point of views.
3. Use abbreviations and symbols to make sure you can have the best counter argument.

**Research:**

1. Make sure your sources are reliable. Try and find out who wrote the article and what their qualifications are. Sometimes the ending of the website will let you know if it trustworthy information. All websites will need to be written down and turned in.
2. Explore both sides of the issue. Even though you are defending one side you have to have knowledge of the opposing side’s arguments in order to defend your own.
3. Topics that should be researched: ethical, economical, individual/society, laws, history/tradition, religion/culture